

<b>GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS</b> Standard Operating Procedures		
<b>Functional Area:</b> Program Services/ Counseling Services	<b>Reference Number:</b> VB01-0010	<b>Revises            Previous            Effective Date:</b>
<b>Subject:</b> Peer Evaluator		NEW
<b>Authority:</b> Donald/Smith	<b>Effective Date:</b> 10/15/07	Page 1 of <div style="text-align: center;">5</div>

**I. POLICY:**

Risk Reduction services shall provide uniform administrative practices and guidelines to follow for the organization and management of the Peer Evaluator Program.

**II. APPLICABILITY:**

All facilities, units, offices, and sections operating under GDC Management, utilizing one or more of the programs offered by Risk Reduction Services.

**III. RELATED DIRECTIVES:**

- A. GDC Rules and Regulations: 125-1-2-.01
- B. GDC Standard Operating Procedures: VB01-0006, VB02-0001, VB03-0002

**IV. DEFINITIONS:**

- A. **Peer Evaluator:** Field staff that have completed specialized Peer Evaluator training from Risk Reduction Services for the purpose of conducting Quality Assurance Evaluations of their peers.
- B. **Risk Reduction Services Programs:** Evidence-based programs coordinated by Risk Reduction Services that, when operated according to established principles and standards, will reduce recidivism.
- C. **Evidence-Based Practice (EBP):** Evidence-Based Practice employs these principles for effective programming: assessing risk and need, designing a treatment plan that addresses offender needs, removing barriers to successful intervention (responsivity), and making appropriate and

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timely referrals to treatment. These principles are research-based and there is conclusive evidence that programs practicing these principles are effective in reducing recidivism.

- D. **Prime For Life (PFL)**: Prime For Life is a lifestyle change protocol that spans the continuum of care from prevention to recovery. The therapeutic education module is designed to meet both prevention and intervention goals. The content process and sequence in both modules are carefully developed to achieve each goal. Prime For Life is designed to reduce risk for problems and focuses on three measurable behavioral prevention goals.
- E. **Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT)**: A structured, cognitive behavioral approach to facilitating change in behavior. MRT is a cognitive restructuring program designed to promote pro-social behavior incorporating the following elements: confrontation and assessment of self, assessment of current relationships, reinforcement of positive behavior and habits, positive identity formation, enhancement of self concept, decreasing hedonism, and developing higher stages of moral reasoning.
- F. **Thinking for a Change (T4C)**: Cognitive Behavioral programs that are designed to facilitate change in offender behavior. T4C focuses on the thinking skills that guide the behavior of offenders, and attempts to replace well-established, maladaptive thinking patterns with cognitive skills that can promote pro-social behavioral choices.
- G. **Quality Assurance Evaluation (QA)**: Quality Assurance Evaluation is a process whereby, at set intervals or by special request, the facilitation practices of a given Cognitive Behavioral Program are reviewed by a PDC of the Risk Reduction Service Cognitive Behavioral Programs Unit. Quality Assurance Evaluations concentrate on program integrity, to ensure the program is delivered in the manner in which it was designed. Quality Assurance Evaluations also address classroom control, organization, and sensitivity to group dynamics, completeness of documentation, group participation, and response to participants' use of the skills.

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H. **Participant**: An inmate, probationer, detainee, or resident who is enrolled in one of the Risk Reduction Services Programs.

I. **Program Development Consultant (PDC)**: PDC's employed by GDC in Risk Reduction specialize in one or more of the RRS Programs. The PDC's duties include, but are not limited to, monitoring, evaluating, and training staff regarding programs at a designated GDC facility. PDC's are also responsible for implementing programs, developing lesson plans, and establishing community awareness regarding programs/services offered by GDC. These responsibilities are not all inclusive.

V. **ATTACHMENTS**:

Attachment 1: Peer Evaluator Application/Agreement to QA

Attachment 2: Moral Reconciliation Therapy Competency Evaluation Form

Attachment 3: Thinking for a Change Competency Evaluation Form

Attachment 4: Prime for Life Competency Evaluation Form

VI. **PROCEDURE**:

A. **Application Process:**

1. Staff interested in becoming a Peer Evaluator will complete the Peer Evaluator Application/Agreement to QA (Attachment #1). Application must include a recommendation from their immediate supervisor.
2. Applications are forwarded to Risk Reduction Services - Cognitive Behavioral Unit for review;
3. Selected candidates will be scheduled for an interview with staff from Risk Reduction Services before final approval is made.

B. **Selection and Training:**

1. Peer Evaluator candidates will have successfully completed a minimum of one rotation of **T4C** and **PFL**.

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Applicants for MRT Peer Evaluators must have at least six months continuous facilitation of **MRT**.

2. Peer Evaluators must possess the following characteristics:
  - a. Above-average verbal skills.
  - b. Ability to relate positively and empathetically to staff and offenders while maintaining a professional relationship that does not compromise rules and regulations.
  - c. Sensitivity to group dynamics and the ability to instruct other staff on how to stimulate groups and promote interest and high activity levels, while maintaining adequate discipline.
  - d. Ability to instruct staff on how to challenge offenders without demeaning them.
  - e. Ability to model above average interpersonal skills including:
    - 1) Empathy
    - 2) Effective problem solving skills
    - 3) Well developed values
    - 4) Rational and logical reasoning
    - 5) Openness to new ideas
  - f. Experience in managing groups of poorly motivated individuals who may be passively or aggressively hostile or critical.
  - g. Willingness to consider views that may not be consistent with their own.
  - h. Must have a strong knowledge of What Works and Principles of Effective Intervention.

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3. Once selected, Peer Evaluators will attend a 10-hour training program to learn how to effectively conduct a QA. Conducting two QA's is included in these training hours.

**C. Operational Guidelines:**

1. Peer Evaluators will only conduct QAs on those programs that they have been trained in and have facilitated.
2. RRS staff will accompany the Peer Evaluator on their first two QA assignments and will evaluate the Peer Evaluator on their ability to relate to staff being evaluated, their ability to model pro-social traits, and their attention to details.
3. RRS staff will provide feedback to the Peer Evaluator and make suggestions for corrective action, if needed.
4. Risk Reduction Services will contact the Peer Evaluator to schedule specific sites or offices for QA. The Peer Evaluator will have 10 working days from this notification to complete the QA with that site or office.
5. Peer Evaluators will be scheduled to conduct a minimum of four (4) QA evaluations per year. Travel requirements will be taken into consideration when making these assignments.
6. The Peer Evaluator will complete a QA report, using the appropriate Competency Evaluation Form (Attachments 2-4), specific to the program reviewed, within five working days of completing the QA visit. The QA forms are confidential and will be forwarded only to the facilitator, the facilitator's supervisor, and members of the Risk Reduction Services Cognitive Behavioral Unit.
7. Peer Evaluators will not conduct QA's at their own work site.

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8. RRS staff may remove staff from the role of Peer Evaluator if it is determined that the individual is consistently not meeting the above standards.

**VII. Record Retention:**

All competency evaluation forms should be kept on file, for review by Risk Reduction Services, for one year.